

The Desert Whispers

from Johnson Valley



Vol. 2, No. 8

THE MOJAVE DESERT, CALIFORNIA

April 26, 1969

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

May 4 - CB coffee break and all-day picnic jamboree beginning at 9 a.m., at the Banning CB Club.

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June 15 - Coffee break with the Lynwood Club.

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May 11 - Desert EARS CB Club regular meeting and pot luck at noon in the Landers Association Hall.

May 3 - Johnson Valley Improvement Association. Dime a dip at 5:30 p.m. Regular meeting at 7:30 p.m. Board meeting at 2 p.m.

May 30 - Annual Fiesta of Malki Museum at 11-795 Fields Road, Banning, beginning at 11 a.m.

DESERT EARS TO MEET

The Desert Ears CB Club will meet at noon on May 11, in the Landers Association Hall on Reche Road, Landers.

Bob Forster, president, invites all citizens band operators to attend. The meeting begins with a pot luck lunch.

Members voted to affiliate with the Civilian Defense in this area at the April meeting. Members will also participate in a Red Cross First Aid Class in Landers.

Guests included Howard and Dorothy Goul, of the J. Goul Company, Torrance, "Quality Engraved Badges."

News From Members

Vice President Cecil McGee and Mrs. McGee received word that their son was wounded in Vietnam and was taken to the Okinawa Hospital for surgery.

Cecil Head was reported in Loma Linda Hospital.

Mrs. Eleanor Calender is recuperating at home after suffering a broken wrist.

DIME A DIP ON MAY 3

A dime a dip precedes the May 3 meeting of the Johnson Valley Improvement Association. Serving will begin at 5:30 p.m. in the Community Hall on Larrea Road.

Mrs. Gus Valentine is chairman, and urges members to bring a favorite dish. The public is invited.

The business meeting follows, at 7:30 p.m., with the new officers presiding.

Alex Chernoff was elected to a fourth term as president.

Serving with Chernoff will be Al Smith, first vice president; Carl Krohn, second vice president; Mrs. May Hartwell, secretary; and Mrs. Gladys Lafoon, treasurer.

Members of the board are Dan Jarvis, Gus Valentine, Charles Breese, O.R. Brakebill, James Cathey, and Mrs. Jean Breese.

Roscoe Alters installed the new officers in brief ceremonies following the election at the April 5 meeting.

Current project of the association is maintenance and naming of roads, and installation of signs.

Efforts are still underway to obtain telephones.

The application of the Bighorn Rural Water Association has been submitted, it was announced by Chernoff, member of the board of directors of the water association. Action has been delayed due to the changeover of the administration, he added. Members of the board were hoping to meet with representatives of the government in San Francisco early this month.

JVIA BOARD TO MEET

The board of directors of the Johnson Valley Improvement Association will meet at 2 p.m. May 3 in the Community Hall on Larrea Road.

The auditing committee of JVIA meets at the same time and place.

NEIGHBORHOOD HAPPENINGS

by Aileen De Victoria

Mike and Mamie Dundee observed their 50th wedding anniversary with open house on April 12 at their Johnson Valley home. We wish this wonderful couple many, many more.

Marilyn Tiggeman's friends gave her a surprise birthday party the same evening at the Chisel Inn. Entertainment was provided by Dolly Halpert, Lucerne Valley, on the accordion, with old songs and polkas.

Marian Brokner and Richard Dumond observed their birthdays on the same day.

*

Lucille Campbell entered Riverside Community April 14 for surgery, and is now at home resting comfortably, it was reported.

Ruby and Deane Piner's daughter Joan underwent surgery on April 11 in Upland. Ruby is staying with Joan until she is fully recovered.

Earl Roush and Elmer Jacobs were both hospitalized for eye operations. Both are recuperating and able to compare notes.

Terry Tiggeman was reported injured in a motorcycle accident on his way to the employment office. Terry was thrown over the car with which he collided. He suffered a broken foot and cuts and bruises. He was wearing his helmet which may have prevented more serious injuries.

*

Johnson Valley Improvement Association had another successful dime a dip on April 5.

*

Easter Sunday was a busy time in the Valley. Mr. and Mrs. George Hartwell enjoyed a visit from daughter Doris and granddaughter Laurie.

The Piners greeted son Deane, and daughter Joan with her husband Bill and their children.

Many residents attended sunrise services in adjoining communities.

*

Mildred Jacobs hosted the women's "Hobknob" card club at the April meeting. (What happened to the Knuckleheads? ed.) Mrs. Gus Valentine was scheduled as the next hostess for the pinochle players.

*

Joe De Victoria sporting a brilliant black eye for awhile, following a blow-out on his truck. The truck fishtailed over a soft shoulder and hit an embankment. Joe suffered a broken rib, crushed breast bone and numerous bruises. -A. D. V.

POLLING PLACE LIKELY

Johnson Valley will probably have its own polling place sometime this year, according to Alex Chernoff, deputy registrar.

In a communication from the County Board of Supervisors, in response to a query, the supervisors looked with favor on establishment of a polling place. Details are to be worked out.

Johnson Valley residents now vote in Lucerne Valley, a drive of 25 miles each way.

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LISTINGS NEEDED

Also available - current information on LAND DIVISION APPLICATIONS.

Lillian L. Sweeney
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(see ad on page five)

BUILDING INFORMATION

New regulations require that persons wiring their cabins allow the power company to designate the location of the meter box, or wall panel. Anyone planning to wire his cabin may contact Southern California Edison Company in the new building on Old Woman Springs Road in Yucca Valley. Property owners should know the legal description of their land when making application at the Edison office.

BUILDING INSPECTOR

John Bennet is the Yucca Valley representative of the Department of Building and Safety of the County of San Bernardino. His office is in the building with the sheriff in Yucca Valley.

The building department office is open from 8 to 9:30 a.m., Monday through Friday.

THE SPINY MESQUITE

Peter Rabbit's "briar patch" in the desert is the spiny mesquite. (mez-keet) Rabbits take shelter under the tree, and also eat the bark and the nutritious beans.

The mesquite, with its tender green leaves, is a tree of high water requirement. Since it grows only where there is ground water, it is a good indicator for a place to dig a well. It is one of the most successful desert plants, according to Norman Hammond Wakeman, in "Southwest Desert Wonderland".

One investigator dug out a root 150 feet long, with a diameter at that point indicating there were many more feet of root.

Mesquite grows best in alluvial soil of flood plains, and in dry lake basins.

Since a seedling needs water where the ground water is 30 to 100 feet below the surface, the mystery is how does it get started and how does it survive before reaching the underground water?

Some scientists believe it may be during the "once in a hundred years or so" of wet summers and winters.

Mesquite is a member of the pea family and has pods filled with beans which served as food for the Indians, as well as desert mammals and domestic cattle.

Indians ate the pods and beans either raw or boiled, and ground the beans into flour for cakes and mush. The pod has a high sugar content and tastes sweet, giving it the name "honey mesquite."

Had the Jayhawkers known the value of the plant they would not have suffered from starvation, Hammond points out.

Mesquite makes fine firewood, and Indians used it for pillars, horizontal roof stringers and siding in building their homes.

The phainopepla, a fly catcher, has another use for mesquite. This shiny black crested bird has a brilliant red eye.

The phainopepla depends on mistletoe berries for a major portion of its diet. It insures an adequate supply by planting the parasite on mesquite.

The bird eats the berries, digests the fruit, and the undigested seeds drop on the mesquite. The seeds produce a gummy material which prevents their digestion, and causes them to stick to the branches, but the mesquite exudes a clear resin which pushes the seed away.

Only the hardest seeds root in the stem, insuring a future supply of berries for the phainopepla.

-Adapted from "Southwest Desert Wonderland," by Norman Hammond Wakeman.

THE OLD HORNED TOAD

The Old Horned Toad's rock is almost hidden by clumps of yellow flowers this spring. Some years the flowers have created carpets of solid gold. This year they seem to be gathered in thicker bunches. The blue and lavender blossoms should be appearing soon.

It takes a little closer look, but the tiny belly flowers are there, also, tiny dots of white, and blue and yellow.

If you observed a blue ostrich with her head in the sand, that was our friend Paulyne Mayes taking close-ups of the tiny flowers. Fred and Paulyne, of Cardiff-by-the-sea, were our most welcome guests recently. The entire family is a cluster of top-notch photographers.

We did it!!! Back to first class mailing and raised the subscription price of the Desert Whispers to \$4 a year.

Seemed as though eight to ten days for delivery was too long, since most of the events ballyhooed were over when the paper arrived. Time will tell whether it is a smart or a dumb move.

The coyotes are certainly making the welkin ring these balmy evenings. (I always thought welkin was a green valley. Just found out it's the curved vault of the sky.) We saw two sidewinders within five minutes, another indication of warmer weather. And our oriole has returned to take over his territory.

Sad to hear of the passing of a long-time friend, Louise Willis. Louise was driving a pick-up truck to social occasions and on shopping excursions long before it became the fad. Always well-dressed, coiffured and modestly bejeweled, she wore her truck like a Cadillac. And I never saw her without a smile, even when loaded with various jobs in community projects.

There is some interesting material available through two museums in the area. San Bernardino County Museum issues some brochures to members, conducts trips, and offers lectures. There is a Lucerne Valley chapter.

Malki Museum in Banning devotes its attention to the Cahuilla Indians. Construction has begun on a new home for the association.

SPRING PREVIEW

One hundred and twenty-five years ago, when the ground was splashed with the bright colors of the spring flowers, John Charles Fremont crossed the high desert.

It was in 1844, following his winter ordeal, when Fremont and his exploring party almost starved to death while crossing the Sierra Nevadas.

The group entered Antelope Valley on April 15. They traveled along the base of the mountains toward Cajon Pass, then eastward to what is now the Victorville area, and across the desert.

Fremont named the Mohahve, with an extra "h" which has been dropped. He also named the Great Basin, Owens Valley and the Golden Gate. He is sometimes called "The Pathfinder."

Fremont and his men were in the area for three weeks, when the wildflowers were at their best. He discovered a small tree with yellow flowers, which has been named Fremontia in his honor.

Also bearing his name are three bright colored flowers - phacelia, chaenactis and syntrichopappus, and a cottonwood.

The explorers traveled along the Mohave River, mapping the area, and Fremont also recorded encounters with the Indians, and descriptions of the plants and the geology.

About May 5, they left the desert and arrived at the Virgin River in Utah.

Fremont was influential in making California a state in 1850, and he became one of the first two United States senators from California.

-M.C.

SHOUTS AND WHISPERS

According to a late bulletin, the Knuckleheads are still around. The first president, Marie Stanley has even been presented with a gavel - a mini-gavel, by Mrs. Gus Valentine. Chances are even the driving force of a single-jack could not be heard above women's chatter, so Marie plans to wear the little gavel as a lapel pin.

*

Lillian Sweeney is now conducting her real estate business from her home on Howard Drive, in Johnson Valley, 19 miles north of the 29 Palms Highway on Old Woman Springs Road.

*

Sarge and Marie Stanley had a pleasant visit with their friends, the Sterners, in San Francisco. They also attended a wedding. The bride is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Johnnie Williams, of Oakland. Johnnie and Sarge were shipmates for about 20 years aboard navy transports.

COMBINED CHURCH SERVICE

The churches of Lucerne Valley took part in a combined inter-denominational service on Good Friday from noon to 1 p.m., with all of the ministers of the various religious sects present.

The Reverend Ronald King gave the introductory prayer for the Baptist Church.

The Reverend Jimmy Forrester of the Foursquare Church gave the sermon.

Father Scanlan was present for the Catholic Church.

The ministers also arranged a combined Sunrise Service for Easter morning. The weather turned wet and windy, so the service was shortened as it was not well-attended.

On May 20, Lt. Col. Davis, the Protestant and head chaplain of George Air Force Base, will entertain the neighboring ministers at dinner, with a tour of the base to follow. All of the ministers in Lucerne Valley plan to attend.

NEW LAND DIVISION REGULATIONS

New regulations, effective March 5, govern the splitting of property in San Bernardino County.

Any land division resulting in any parcel of less than 2½ acres requires a licensed survey.

Splits of any five acre parcel require application to and approval of the County Planning Department, and approval of the County Planning Commission when automatic approval can not be granted.

Filing fee is \$5, plus \$5 for each lot.

The regulations require easements to all resulting lots, and a net area of not less than 7,200 square feet.

Regulations define map requirements, frontage, time limits and certification.

Specific standards apply to any parcel of less than 2½ acres gross in size.

Realtor Lillian Sweeney has a limited number of application maps, and additional information on the Land Division Regulations as outlined in Ordinance 1476. Miss Sweeney also has a copy of the map of the proposed widening of Old Woman Springs Road, which shows elimination of a bad curve east of Timico Acres.

DIME A DIP SATURDAY EVENING May 3

Serving begins at 5:30 p.m.

Johnson Valley Improvement Association
Community Hall-Larrea Road-Johnson Valley

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Mesa Road, Lucerne Valley
Sunday Masses at 8 and 11 a.m.

Rev. Patrick J. Scanlan, Pastor

LANDERS COMMUNITY CHURCH

Off Old Woman Springs Road at the
New Dixie Mine Road in Landers, Calif.

Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship 11:00 a.m.
Evening Worship 6:30 p.m.
Hour of Power Wed. ... 7:00 p.m.

Want to help



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